DRAFT

Workforce Management Plan

2017 - 2021

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Amendment Act 2009

Adopted by Walcha Council on

Document History

Version	Date	Details
A – B		Drafts prepared and amended based on consultation with the community and Council.
1	29 June 2011	Adopted by Council
2	31July 2013	Reviewed and adopted by Council.
3	2017	Reviewed and adopted by Council

Contents

Introduction

As a result of legislation enacted in October 2009, all New South Wales local councils are required by the Local Government Act 1993 to develop a community strategic plan. Among other requirements the plan must:

❖ Provide for a resourcing strategy that describes how community assets will be used in the future, how the Council workforce will be managed to deliver the desired plan outcomes and a financial plan to show how the plan will be funded.

This workforce plan has been prepared to show how Council will deliver the goals and strategies detailed in the Community Strategic Plan – Walcha 2027.

Council's Workforce Planning Process is a continual process designed to match workforce requirements with organisational objectives, now and in the future. It provides us with clear direction and helps identify our future desired workforce. At the simplest level, our Plan aims to have the right people in the right place at the right time, all the time, so that we are not caught out and left ill equipped to deal with the needs of our Community.

There are many benefits associated with Workforce Planning and they include:

❖ The identification of future staffing requirements and any possible skill shortages or over supply
❖ A plan to close skill gaps can be prepared
❖ A planned recruitment strategy including appropriate time frames and costs
❖ Specific recruitment or training initiatives can help plan for new jobs
❖ Staffing costs may be reduced through close analysis of staffing requirements and ensuring appropriate levels of staff
❖ Employees whose skills are unlikely to meet future needs can be retrained
❖ Staff development needs can be better identified.

Further, it contributes to the attraction, retention, and development of a capable workforce which delivers Council's strategy and ensures we have adequate and appropriately skilled staff employed in the most effective way.

Framework

The following diagram illustrates the integrated planning framework for Walcha 2027 and the way the Workforce Management Plan forms part of the Resourcing Strategy required to support the Plan.
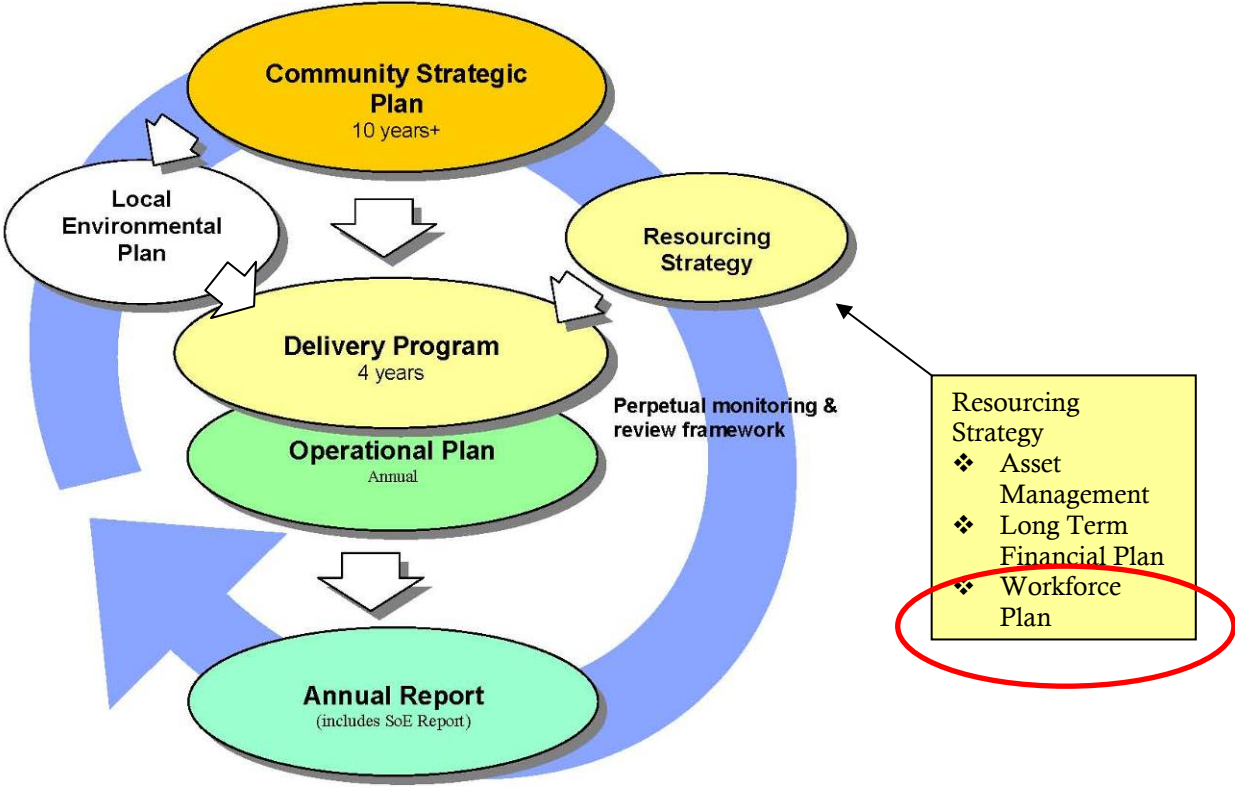
Organisational structure

Council organisational structure has been developed and recently reviewed to provide the positions and reporting hierarchy to ensure the effective delivery of Council's programs and services. The staff structure is shown below in Figures 1

Figure 1 – Council Organisational Structure
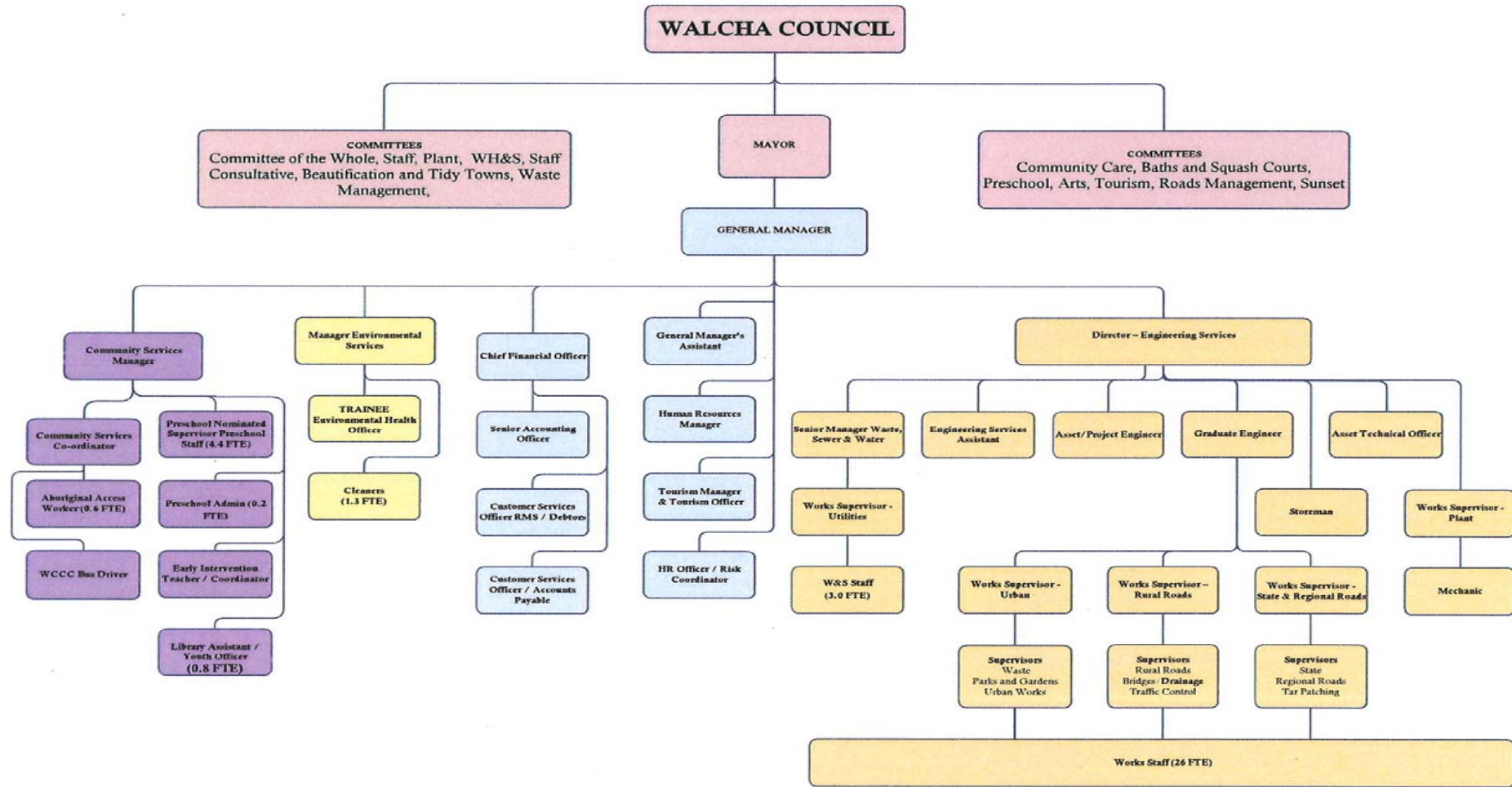
Walcha Council Organisation Chart
2016

Current Workforce

Current Workforce Profile

Walcha Council is considered to be a small Council that employees 93 staff members across a variety of different roles.

Council's currently employs 93 staff as follows

Permanent full time	58	62.36%
Permanent part time	23	24.73%
Term full time	0	0%
Term part time	2	2.15%
Casual	10	10.75%
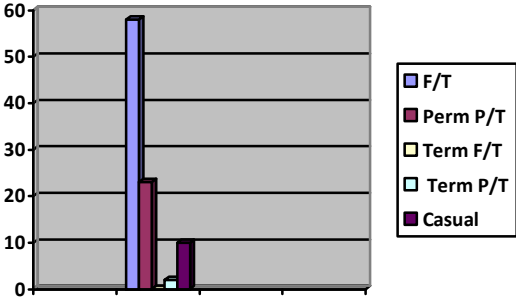
Figure- Break down of employee status

Currently the ratio of male to female staff is as follows with our workforce 39.79 % female, and 60.21 % male. There is a higher level of female to male employees within the indoor environment, whereas the outdoor environment has a higher number of male employees. This is mainly to do with the nature of the work and may change over time as women continue to step more into traditionally male dominated roles.
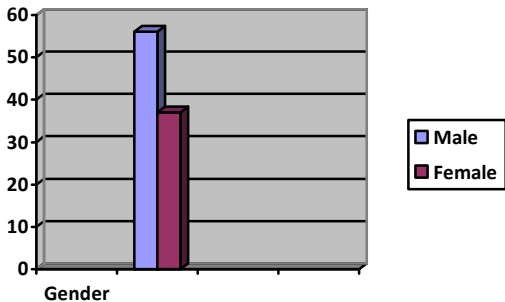
Figure - Gender percentage break down

Age

One of the main issues Council will need to deal with over the next 10 years is its aging workforce.
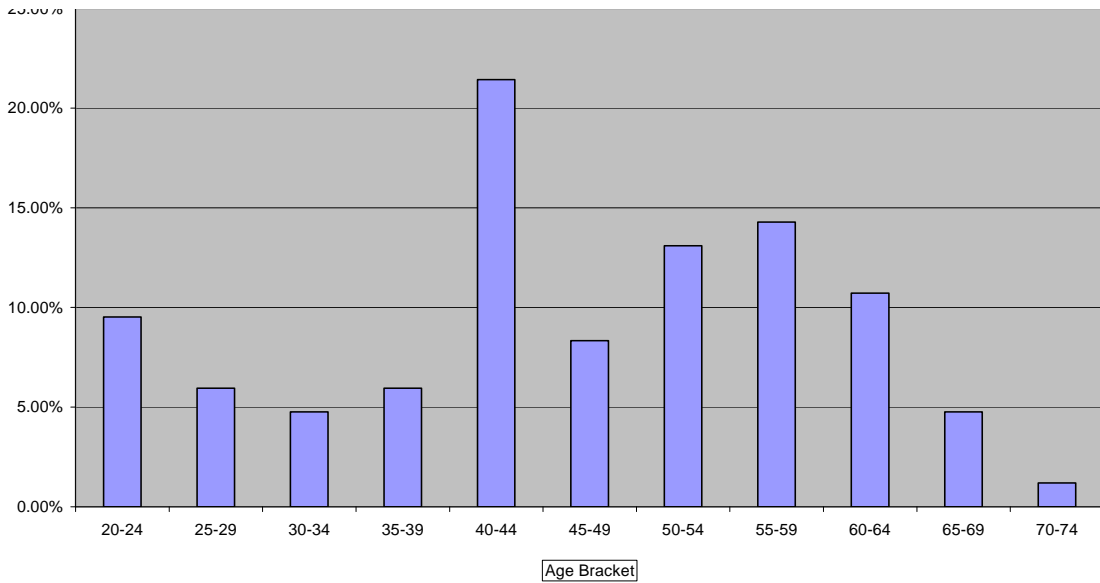
Figure 2 - Walcha Council Workforce – Percentage of All Employees by Age – 2013

The above distribution of Council's workforce by age is similar to the distribution of the age of the Walcha population.

Figure 2 - Walcha Population Compared with Walcha Council Workforce – Percentage by Age

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Staff retention

Over the past 11 years Council has experienced an average staff turnover of 5.93% pa. This compares to figures according to the Australian Institute of Management's (AIM) National Salary Survey 2009 which state "Voluntary staff turnover rates have fallen to 9% per annum, from 12.7% in the previous year."

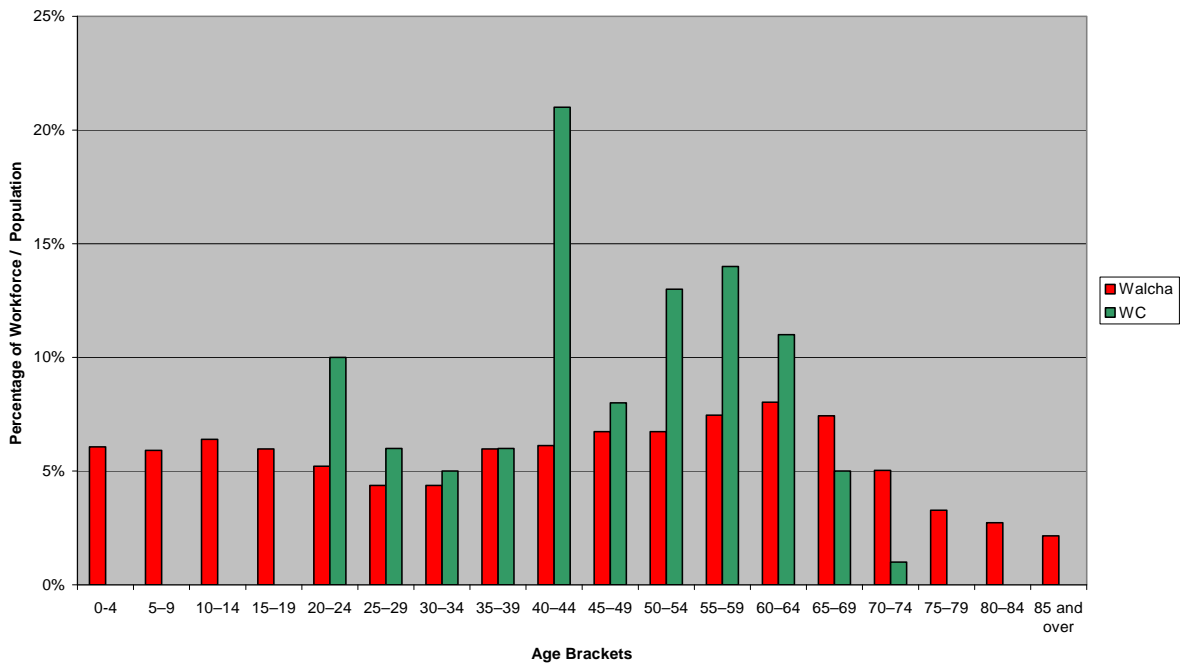Being a small community staff turnover is minimal. Council is planning well into the future to provide stimulating employment for all staff as well as having multi-skilled employees to meet the changing needs of the community.

Council's salary system incorporates skills based salary progression. Of the outcomes being sought, one is to better identify and clarify opportunities for skills development of individuals and to integrate these with the Corporate Training Plan, enhancing organisational skills, capability, and job satisfaction. Council commitment to this is demonstrated with 54.21% of current employees aged less than 50 years, the average age of employees being 45 and the average years of service being 10.

Succession planning has and will continue to be incorporated into the salary system, ensuring the transfer of skills and knowledge and organisational continuity.

The principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and merit-based selection are applied at all times.

Workforce Planning Challenges and Issues identified

There are a number of issues are currently facing Council in terms of our existing workforce and such issues have been identified via:
- ❖ Analysis of our current Workforce Profile.
- ❖ Analysis of data relating to the region
- ❖ Strategic discussions with Departmental Managers which sought information about current and future staffing and skill needs, including the identification of critical and difficult to fill positions, as well as general thoughts on Council's working environment
- ❖ Information obtained through performance appraisals and 1:1 discussions with various employees

Some of the issues faced by Council are:

Age Profile and Ageing Workforce

A substantial number of people within our current workforce are aged over 50 years and many staff will be considering retirement within the next 10 years. This means that we will face challenges in filling the skill gaps as older employees retire and leave the workforce.

Australia's population is also ageing and this is mainly due to sustained low levels of fertility and increasing life expectancy. According to the latest population projections released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australia's population is set to change substantially over the next 50 years, and it is predicted that around one in four

Australians will be 65 years or older by 2056, which is quite a contrast to the census of 2007 which revealed that approximately 13% of the population was over 65 years of age.

It is evident from the published research that the pool of available people that will be actively looking for work will diminish over the next two decades particularly in the 17 to 45 years of age bracket. With a smaller labour market, the demand for skilled and experienced workers will increase competition and create challenges for the Local Government Sector and Walcha Council will need to review their methods of employing and retaining skilled staff.

The ageing of Australia's population, already evident in the current age structure, is expected to continue. This is the result of sustained low levels of fertility combined with increasing life expectancy at birth. The median age of Australia's population (36.8 years at 30 June 2007,) is projected to increase to between 38.7 years and 40.7 years in 2026, and to between 41.9 years and 45.2 years in 2056.

Evolving needs of a multigenerational workforce

Council has four generations currently engaged in the workforce: the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Y and Z. Each generation has unique traits which define the generational characteristics. A breakdown as follows will describe the unique traits of each group.

Baby Boomers (1946- 1964)
Currently around 30% of the population
	Characteristics
	  o Workaholic
	  o Career focused
	  o Independent
	  o Self reliant
	  o Goal oriented
	  o Competitive
	  o Resourceful
	  o Live to work

Generation X (1965 – 1979)
Currently around 21% of the population
	Characteristics
	  o Individualistic
	  o Entrepreneurial
	  o Self sufficient
	  o Dislike being micromanaged
	  o Technologically adept
	  o Flexible
	  o Adapt well to change
	  o Less committed to one employer
	  o Work to live

Generation Y (1980 – 1994)
Currently around 30% of the population
	Characteristics
	  o Technologically savvy
	  o Communicate via email and SMS
	  o Prioritise family over work
	  o Confident
	  o Ambitious
	  o Seeks challenges
	  o Team oriented

	o Crave attention/ feedback and guidance
Generation Z (1994 – 2004) Currently around 11% of the population and will reach 13.5% of the workforce by 2015.	Characteristics o Born with complete technology, PCs, mobile phones, gaming devices, and the Internet. o Communicate via email and SMS and social media barely via telephone o Reliant on technology and gadgets o Confident and not bothered by privacy, share information with strangers o Grasp technology quick o Seeks challenges able to multitask, however losing ability to focus and analyse more complex lengthy tasks. o Require information to be delivered in short speedy bursts. o Require instant gratification

This information clearly shows a vast difference in attitudes and expectations towards work, which directly impacts on the types of attraction and retention strategies that should be adopted by Council.

Increasing competition between both private and public sector and its impact on attracting and retaining quality staff

There are a number of key positions within Walcha Council that have posed long term challenges for the Council. Like many local governments, particularly those within rural areas, attracting skilled and qualified staff has been challenging.

Over the last few years, engineering staff and other specialist workers have been particularly challenging to recruit for Walcha Council.

The general rule is that many applications have been received for positions which do not require post-secondary qualifications, but it is harder to attract applicants for those that do require such qualifications.

As there is increasing competition across local government and private industry to attract and recruit employees with the right skills and experience, it means employers need to continually set themselves apart from others, promote themselves accordingly, and also to have a workplace culture that appeals to the changing demographics.

Given that Walcha has 3 other Councils in close proximity, and Tamworth and Armidale both within travelling distance, it is vital for Walcha Council to ensure that it continues to promote the overall advantages associated with our organisation whilst tailoring our approach to the individual.

Walcha Council will consistently strive to be considered an Employer of Choice and will at all opportunities highlight the benefits of working within local government.

Internal Skill Gaps

Many of our workers will soon be approaching retirement age and we may face some challenges in filling skill / employment gaps as these older employees leave the workforce.

The younger employees remaining with Council are less likely to have the acquired skills, experience and attributes necessary for promotion to senior roles, which indicate a need for ongoing succession planning, further training and development, and the capturing of knowledge.

It is also important to note that for most roles considered 'senior, business critical or high risk', Council does not have the necessary skills internally to be able to respond to this change should we find ourselves in the position where we didn't have those staff within the organisation.

Remote location

Walcha is located 45 minutes from Armidale, and the town has limited rental properties available. This can mean that it is hard to not only attract someone to the area, but it can also make retention harder given the travel that is potentially required. It leaves Council vulnerable to losing people to other positions that are closer to rental opportunities.

Workforce Plan Strategies

The National Local Government Workforce Strategy 2013-2020 has introduced eight strategies and associated actions that are designed to form a consistent national methodology for workforce development, in order to encourage a strategic approach to meeting current and emerging challenges.

The eight strategies are:
- ❖ Improving Workforce Planning and Development
- ❖ Promoting Local Government as a Place-Based Employer of Choice
- ❖ Retaining and Attracting a Diverse Workforce
- ❖ Creating a Contemporary Workplace
- ❖ Investing in skills
- ❖ Improving Productivity and Leveraging Technology
- ❖ Maximising Management and Leadership
- ❖ Implementation and Collaboration

Future workforce planning will be aligned directly with these strategies wherever possible.

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Objective 1: Work towards minimising skills gaps

Strategy	Action
Offer continuous learning and development opportunities by:	o Continuing to build the capacity and skills of our existing staff. o Looking for mentoring opportunities where applicable. o Increasing staff utilisation of sponsored study. o Continue to provide training that benefits both Council and the employee. o Try to align a portion of training with future aspirations. o Ensure each employee has a development plan. o Ensure that corporate/ technical knowledge is captured and retained. o Continue to offer opportunities to side step into a different role that may not involve a direct promotion, but provides new opportunities to learn different skills. o Utilise the 1:1 experience to learn more about our employees and their interests, future goals and their expectations.
Recognise, develop and grow our own next level generation of leaders and key personnel by:	o Seeking out mentoring opportunities for emerging talent. o Leadership qualities are developed and supported. o Continued financial assistance and study leave for staff pursuing study o Promoting the opportunity where available to act at higher levels. o Where feasible, utilise the JO opportunities for facilitating secondments / transfers between other Councils. o Ensure that knowledge is captured and transferred between employees. o Strategic discussions to ascertain future aspirations. o Implement development plans that not only grow technical skills, but also traits necessary for leadership. o Improving the level of skills available in Council by actively recruiting new staff with appropriate qualifications, and diverse career backgrounds. o Provide training that continues to grow and build the capability of our high achievers and staff with identified potential. o Formalised KPIs. o Regular 1:1 with manager. o Continue to provide access to leadership / management training for emerging talent.

Ensure planning is undertaken to address issues with the ageing workforce and succession planning by	o Carefully manage the physical capability of workers undertaking tasks to ensure their long term health, well being and productivity capacity.
	o Develop information sharing processes to retain corporate knowledge.
	o Identify critical positions for succession planning and develop strategies.
	o Identify potential employees for succession planning, and work with them to bridge any gaps that may inhibit their ability to step up in the future.
	o Where possible, predict & plan for employee's retirement.
	o Investigate phased retirement options, and continue to offer flexible working arrangements consisting of job share options, reduced hours etc.
	o Continue to offer apprenticeships and traineeships to address the ageing workforce and contribute to Council's future skill base.

Objective 2: Retention of qualified and competent employees

Strategy	Action
Retention of appropriately skilled and experienced staff by:	o Streamline Recruitment and Selection practices and the On boarding experience afterwards .
	o Council acknowledges work life balance, and will continue to offer flexible working arrangements where possible within business requirements. This will include opportunities to vary start/finish times to home location is not local.
	o Look for ways to reward and recognise high achievers
	o Reviewing existing salary system to look for ways to reward people that are maxed out at the top of their level.
	o Housing assistance for Executive Staff to assist in attraction and retention of critical skilled staff.
	o Regular 1:1 with Managers to continue to ascertain levels of engagement, motivation and continued career aspirations.
	o Gather information to determine why people are attracted to working at Council and why they stay.
	o Ensure employees feel that they can make a difference to the community by linking in work plans to the existing Community Plan.
	o Regularly monitoring and reviewing the of existing policies - conduct internal employee opinion survey to seek feedback from staff.
Retention of mature aged employees by:	o Offer a range of flexible work options to staff approaching retirement and establish a structured

	process for individual phased retirement plans.
	o Recognise the value of their knowledge and work with them to capture that knowledge and impart it onto the younger generation.
Retention of younger generational employees by:	o Having a clear picture of their career aspirations and then working together to try to ensure that their career path fits within the opportunities at Council.
	o Regular 1:1 with Manager.
	o Provide regular feedback.
	o Explore increased multi skilling opportunities.
	o Provide training that is beneficial to both them and us.
	o Seek to provide a mentor wherever possible.

Objective 3: Recruitment of suitably qualified people from a more diverse network of talent

Strategy	Action
Become known as an employer of choice	o Develop relationship with educational institutions to promote Local Government opportunities.
	o Participate in promotional opportunities.
	o Continuing to market the benefits of working for Council via Council's website.
	o Continue to marketing the benefits of working for Council via all job advertisements and all through the recruitment process.
	o Reviewing existing salary system and continued benchmarking to ensure market competitiveness.
Ensure Council can attract quality employees by:	o Continued implementation of Work Experience Program, thereby promoting a career with Council.
	o Strengthening of relationships with educational institutions, thereby promoting a career with Council.
	o Becoming more innovative with our advertising. Council continues to advertise in a variety of mediums including websites, print media an will endeavour to become more active within the social media sphere.
	o Lessen restrictive selection criteria especially with regards to experience when dealing with hard to fill roles.
	o Ensure Council's recruitment procedure continues to deliver suitable pools of candidates in a timely manner.
	o Recognising what drives the different generations within the workforce and appealing to those needs.
	o Consideration of whether positions as they become vacant, are suitable for redesign for part time employment or other flexible work arrangements – to suit women, mature workforce or people with a disability.
	o Encouraging work experience students to apply for any current or future vacancies.

Objective 4: Ensure HR practices & processes align with Leadership direction and Organisational Culture, and ensure that our workforce aligns with the Organisational Culture

Strategy	Action
Promote and support a workplace culture that reflects ethical practices and behaviour by:	o Implement an effective Exit Interview program that will allow an understanding of workforce challenges and priorities, and to also leave the door open for people leaving to potentially return to us one day . o Ensure that all industrial relations requirements are met. o Ensure the People and Culture Plan incorporates all issues identified in Workforce Plan and that it achieves the strategic HR direction that the General Manager desires. o Create processes to improve the recording of human resource data to allow appropriate analysis of workplace issues and trends. o Review the capacity of dedicated HR resources in line with HR outputs, KPI's and organisational requirements including future resourcing of the Workforce Plan (annual review). o Continually review processes to ensure maximum efficiency. o Council will maintain a culture that is supportive of social justice, equity and diversity in the workplace and reflects the values of the wider community through EEO considerations and employment processes. o Implement and embed values into our every day way of doing things. o Review Council's position descriptions to include corporate values and culture. o Implement a staff satisfaction survey that is undertaken yearly. o Review performance management process and make changes where appropriate. o Continue to develop Council's induction program ensuring appropriate content and delivery.
Create a culture accepting of change that continually fosters two-way communication by:	o Develop KPI's and ensure that they directly link in and align to the Delivery Program. o Ensure that all exiting staff participate in an exit interview to allow an understanding of workforce challenges and priorities. o Continued consultation in relation to workplace change. When serious change is about to occur, Walcha Council will provide a time for employees to voice concerns and the ELT will simply hear them out before

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	responding at a later date.
	o Ensure that all employees live and breathe our values.
	o 1:1 discussions provide an open forum where feedback can be given and received in a respectful, constructive manner.
	o Actively seek feedback from our workforce in relation to their work environment.

Monitoring and Review

Council is fully committed to the regular review of all current policies, procedures, and strategies that relate to its workforce, and in particular, this plan. This Workforce Plan will be reviewed and updated annually and strategies adjusted to align the existing workforce with changing internal and external influences.

The following activities will be used to monitor and manage the ongoing the workforce planning progress towards objectives and to ensure that the workforce plan is a living document that remains relevant and appropriate to guide planning and decision-making:

❖ Review of HR data and trends once HR data banks are established
❖ Ensure workforce-planning processes, principles, and practices are included in the annual planning cycle activities.
❖ Review of the HR capacity and capability annually through regular meetings with General Manager and also within the annual performance appraisal system
❖ Review of workforce implications being considered in Council decision-making and project planning processes that are measured against the corporate plan.
❖ General Manager to report annually to the Council on the progress with the Workforce Plan and recommend any revisions to the Community Plan